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## Richard C. Bridges to his Sister M., 16 April 1863

Richard C. Bridges

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Camp near Blackwater Va  
Dear Sister M. April 16<sup>th</sup> 1863

I have just arrived  
at our old camp after an  
absence of nearly a week. About  
a week ago we were ordered to  
start from camp with six days  
cooked rations in our haversacks  
and no other clothing but two  
blankets to the man on last  
Saturday after having thrown  
pontoon bridges across the river  
in three places we commenced  
crossing the Blackwater in three  
separate columns One going by  
way of Lawrence's ford another by  
way of Franklin and the other by  
way of South Dossy. At the latter  
place my Regiment crossed  
Saturday we advanced some 17

miles in the direction of Suffolk  
captured the Yankee picket and  
laid siege to the town which  
has been strongly fortified by  
the enemy since we gave it  
up Suffolk is in Staunton  
county and on the Staunton  
River which is navigable for  
gunboats up to the town Yes-  
terday we had a hard duel  
with the enemy's gunboats which  
resulted in a success on our  
side as far as I can learn we  
sunk one gunboat and crippled  
two others Late yesterday evening  
there was very heavy skirmishing  
all along the lines which indica-  
ted that the enemy was trying  
to cover some movement of  
importance I was in two miles  
of the pickets this morning  
at seven o'clock and not a gun



was to be heard and up to this  
time in the day (2 o'clock PM) There  
has not been a gun fired on  
either side I mean a cannon  
I am too far off to hear small  
arms From all this silence I  
am led to believe the enemy have  
either capitulated or evacuated  
the city Another reason I have for  
believing this is because yesterday  
a lady came out of the town  
and reported that the enemy  
were preparing to leave the place  
Gen Longstreet has command  
of the Confederate forces Gen  
Pick commands ~~of~~ the Feds,  
Gen Longstreet has 44 Regiment  
infantry and nearly a hundred  
pieces of artillery His troops are  
the worn veterans the flower of  
Lee's old army You may ask  
why I am away from my command

and not in the front of the  
besieged town let me explain  
I was taken badly <sup>first</sup> with the ~~mumps~~  
mumps the very morning that  
we arrived in front of Suffolk  
Since then I have been slaying  
all <sup>day</sup> nights with a citizen who  
lives near our lines. He is a very  
clever ~~man~~ quite a gentleman but he  
has a daughter that is more of  
a gentleman than he is They  
have succeeded in curing me  
of the mumps and tomorrow  
I will again be in ranks  
You may tell Mr Stornan I have  
found a Virginia girl at last  
that will suit me exactly if I  
can only get her to wilt She  
is the most bullying woman that  
ever trod shoe leather You must not  
let this get out for you know it  
is sometimes advisable to have two



string to ones bow and I do not  
quite know which I like the best  
You wrote to me in your last  
something about clothing, Well  
I hardly know what to say  
I have on hand now shirts  
and socks enough to do me  
through the summer or very  
near it The only thing I  
will need will be drawers and  
pants As a matter of course  
I would like to have my  
shirts a little thinner than  
the ones I have now for summer  
but these I have now  
will do finely I must  
close. Send my clothes if  
you see any chance Good  
bye your ever loving brother  
R C Bridges